

to the Broward Community Partnership on the Homeless.

He is also an active participant in South Florida's business community. Mr. Book is a trustee and Council of 100 members of the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce and was the Director and Special Counsel for former Florida Governor, Bob Graham's Cabinet.

Mr. Book earned a Juris Doctorate at Tulane University and a Bachelor's degree in Political Science at Florida International University. He currently practices in Aventura and Tallahassee. Of all his accomplishments, Ron and his wife, Pat, are most proud of their children, Lauren (20), Samantha (18) and Chase (13).

For his exemplary and inspirational work, reflecting the goals and aspirations of the ADL, I congratulate Ronald L. Book on this distinguished honor.

RECOGNITION OF 2006 WINTER OLYMPIC ATHLETES

HON. STEVEN R. ROTHMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 2, 2006

Mr. ROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize all of the Olympic athletes who competed last month at the Winter Games in Turin, Italy. The Olympic Games have always sought to bring people together in peace to respect universal moral principles. They give the finest athletes in the world the chance to compete with pride and honor. I am proud that three of my constituents from East Rutherford, New Jersey, in my Ninth Congressional District, competed among the world's best at the 2006 Winter Olympics. Brian Gionta, Scott Gomez, and Brian Rafalski were all members of the Men's United States Olympic Ice Hockey Team.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to especially honor these three young men who have distinguished themselves in the sport of ice hockey, and proudly represented the United States at the 2006 Winter Olympic Games in Turin, Italy.

INTRODUCTION OF THE SUNLIGHT RULE

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 2, 2006

Mr. PAUL. Mr. Speaker, Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis famously said, "Sunlight is the best disinfectant." In order to shine sunlight on the practices of the House of Representatives, and thus restore public trust and integrity to this institution, I am introducing the sunlight rule, which amends House rules to ensure that Members have adequate time to study a bill before being asked to vote on it. One of the chief causes of increasing public cynicism regarding Congress is the way major pieces of legislation are brought to the floor without Members having an opportunity to read the bills. This is particularly a problem with the Appropriations conference reports, which are often rushed to the floor of the

House in late-night sessions at the end of the year. For example, just this past December, the House voted on the Fiscal Year 2006 Defense Appropriations Conference Report at approximately 4 a.m.—just 4 hours after the report was filed. Yet, the report contained language dealing with avian flu, including controversial language regarding immunity liability for vaccine manufacturers, that was added in the House-Senate conference on the bill. Considering legislation on important issues in this manner is a dereliction of our duty as the people's elected representatives.

My proposed rule requires that no piece of legislation, including conference reports, can be brought before the House of Representatives unless it has been available to Members and staff in both print and electronic version for at least 10 days. My bill also requires that a manager's amendment that makes substantive changes to a bill be available in both printed and electronic forms at least 72 hours before being voted on. While manager's amendments are usually reserved for technical changes, oftentimes manager's amendments contain substantive additions to or subtractions from bills. Members should be made aware of such changes before being asked to vote on a bill.

The sunlight rule provides the people the opportunity to be involved in enforcing the rule by allowing a citizen to move for censure of any House Member who votes for a bill brought to the floor in violation of this act. The sunlight rule can never be waived by the Committee on Rules or House leadership. If an attempt is made to bring a bill to the floor in violation of this rule, any member could raise a point of order requiring the bill to be immediately pulled from the House calendar until it can be brought to the floor in a manner consistent with this rule.

Mr. Speaker, the practice of rushing bills to the floor before individual Members have had a chance to study the bills is one of the major factors contributing to public distrust of Congress. Voting on bills before Members have had time to study them makes a mockery of representative government and cheats the voters who sent us here to make informed decisions on public policy. Adopting the sunlight rule is one of, if not the, most important changes to the House rules this Congress could make to restore public trust in, and help preserve the integrity of, this institution. I hope my colleagues will support this change to the House rules.

INTRODUCTION OF THE INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVENESS ACT

HON. BOB GOODLATTE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, March 2, 2006

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to introduce the Innovation and Competitiveness Act.

The Framers of our system of government realized that innovation was essential to the success of the United States. They embodied this strong belief in Article I Section 8 of our Constitution, which lays the framework for our nation's copyright and patent laws. The Framers realized that American innovation was so

important that it merited specific reference and protection in our founding document.

Today, America is the world leader in innovation. However, to ensure that America remains the world leader, we must again take a hard look at our policies to make sure that they still encourage inventors to create and businesses to grow and expand.

Every business and individual must weigh the advantages and the hurdles when making the decisions about whether to bring an idea to the market, expand services to other geographical areas and the like. In addition to market factors, unfortunately, today there are additional hurdles to innovation and growth—excessive litigation, as well as taxation, red tape and regulation imposed by governments.

The Innovation and Competitiveness Act is a comprehensive piece of legislation to get Congress engaged in the business of promoting innovation in America by creating additional incentives for private individuals and businesses to create and rollout new products and services so that America will remain the world leader in innovation. Government sometimes is the problem—not the answer to the problem—so the Innovation and Competitiveness Act also addresses government-imposed hurdles to innovation by clearing the way for inventors and businesses to do what they do best—create and compete.

Specifically, this legislation will promote research and development by permanently extending the R&D tax credit. Companies know best how to spend their money on research and development, not government bureaucracies.

In addition, excessive red tape and confusing rules regarding tax liability are currently stifling businesses from moving across State lines. Increasingly, States are taxing businesses outside their borders for the right to do business within the State even when those out-of-State businesses have minimal contacts with the taxing jurisdictions. Given this environment, some businesses have made the decision that it is not worth expanding to other jurisdictions because of the ambiguity about when they must pay these taxes and the fear of aggressive taxation and the resulting litigation and compliance costs. The Innovation and Competitiveness Act contains provisions to set clear, bright line rules for when out-of-State businesses would be obliged to pay taxes to a jurisdiction. This bill creates a physical presence test such that States could only collect business activity taxes from businesses with employees or property in the taxing State. This will create the clarity necessary for businesses to grow beyond State lines, and offer new and exciting products and services to consumers.

In addition, excessive litigation hampers investment and innovation. With that in mind, this legislation cracks down on frivolous lawsuits by strengthening sanctions against attorneys who file truly frivolous actions.

Furthermore, rising health care costs are one of the most difficult challenges facing individuals, businesses and manufacturing today. The Innovation and Competitiveness Act contains provisions that will allow individuals to purchase health insurance that best suits their needs and budgets, while also promoting competition in health care. In addition, our bill encourages the use of health information technology, which will improve health quality and